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Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4405th meeting

Monday, 5 November 2001, 10 a.m.
New York

President	Miss Durrant	(Jamaica)
Members	Bangladesh	Mr. Ahsan
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Tunisia	Mr. Mejdoub
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchinsky
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Liberia

Letter dated 26 October 2001 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/1015).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-61869 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of November, I should like to take the opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Mr. Richard Ryan, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of October 2001. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Ryan for the great diplomatic skills with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Liberia

Letter dated 26 October 2001 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/1015)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Belgium, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

Let me, on behalf of the Council, welcome Mr. Monie R. Captan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Captan (Liberia) took a seat at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. De Ruyt (Belgium), Mr. Fall (Guinea) and Mr. Matturi (Sierra Leone) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kishore Mahbubani, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001), concerning Liberia.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Mahbubani to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Edward Tsui, Director, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Tsui to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on the agenda. Members of the Council have before them document S/2001/965, which contains a report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 13 (b) of Security Council resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2001/1015, which contains a letter dated 26 October 2001 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia, addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the report of the Panel of Experts.

I should also like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following documents: S/2001/1035, containing a letter dated 31 October 2001 from Liberia, and S/2001/1043, containing a letter dated 2 November 2001 from Singapore.

I give the floor to Mr. Kishore Mahbubani, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia.

Mr. Mahbubani: I thank you, Madam President, for setting aside the time for this open meeting of the

Security Council on the report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia. I convey this thanks most sincerely, because, as you know, we were supposed to have this meeting in October, but, as a result of various delays, we are having it this month, despite your busy schedule. We are glad that you have accommodated us.

I am also pleased to introduce the Chairman and members of the Panel of Experts on Liberia established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 19 of resolution 1343 (2001). They will present the report to the Council today. The Chairman of the Panel is Mr. Martin Chungong Ayafor, on my left, and the other members of the Panel, behind me, are: Mr. Atabou Bodian, from Senegal, an expert on civil aviation; Mr. Johan Peleman, from Belgium, an expert on arms and transportation; Mr. Harjit Singh Sandhu, from India, an expert from INTERPOL; and Mr. Alex Vines, from the United Kingdom, an expert on diamonds.

The report was to have been issued on 7 September, by an order to allow the Panel a full six months for its work. Since the Panel was only set up on 15 April, the Council agreed to the report's being submitted on 15 October. However, the issuance of the report was further delayed until 1 November, because of technical processing difficulties.

This report, along with the report (S/2001/939) of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian impact of possible sanctions on Liberia, was considered at two meetings of the sanctions Committee, on 22 and 25 October. On Friday, 2 November 2001, I briefed the Council members on the outcome of these meetings.

The report before us represents six months of arduous work by the members of the Panel, who substantiated their findings with extensive case studies and clear descriptions of their methodology. They also employed high standards of verification in conducting their investigations. The Panel has provided recommendations on all aspects of its mandate, including transport, weapons, the use of revenue by the Liberian Government, logging and wood processing, diamonds, the maritime and corporate registry, the travel ban, and the continued monitoring of resolution 1343 (2001). The Council is agreed that the report will be further considered after this open meeting by the sanctions Committee, which will, of course, study the recommendations in greater detail.

At this stage, I would like to once again publicly thank the Panel members for the professional manner in which they have carried out their mandate. I commend them for the clear and compelling rendering of the report.

I will now, with your permission, Madam President, turn the floor over to the Chairman, Mr. Ayafor, to make his presentation.

Mr. Ayafor: Madam President, at the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency for the month of November. I thank you for this unique opportunity granted to me as Chairman, on behalf of the Panel of Experts on Liberia, to address the Security Council at its public meeting today. I also thank Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia, for his introduction of the Panel's report.

Following the adoption of resolution 1343 (2001) on 7 March 2001, the Secretary-General on 23 March announced (S/2001/268) the appointment of a Panel of Experts with a mandate to, among other things, investigate violations of the newly tightened arms embargo on Liberia, the ban on exports of Liberian diamonds, and the travel ban on senior members of the Government of Liberia, its armed forces and their spouses and other individuals providing financial and military support to armed rebel groups; collect information on compliance by the Government of Liberia with the demands to expel all members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) from Liberia, cease all financial and military support to the RUF, cease all direct or indirect imports of Sierra Leone rough diamonds, freeze funds or financial resources controlled by the RUF in Liberia and ground all Liberian registered aircraft; further investigate possible links between the exploitation of natural resources, other forms of economic activity in Liberia and the fuelling of conflict in Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries, in particular those areas highlighted by the report of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1306 (2000) concerning Sierra Leone; collect information linked to the illegal activities of the individuals referred to in the report of the Panel of Experts on Sierra Leone; and, finally, collect information concerning any other alleged violations of resolution 1343 (2001).

In carrying out its mandate, the Panel requested specific information from the relevant countries, through their Permanent Missions to the United

Nations, regarding certain arms shipments, the movement of suspicious aircraft used for the illegal transportation of arms and ammunition, and other aspects of the mandate. In each country, Panel members interviewed Government authorities and, where relevant, diplomatic missions, civil society organizations, aid agencies and private sector firms. They also contacted a number of individuals suspected of being involved in the violations of sanctions as well as individuals whose names have been the subject of interest in recent months in connection with the crisis in the subregion. The Panel travelled extensively to countries which evidence led it to. Some countries volunteered information and invited the Panel to verify it. In others, the Panel cooperated with the authorities to obtain details on certain activities taking place within their jurisdiction.

There has been a great deal of mystique attached to several places in the subregion of Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. The Panel visited all such areas where it was humanly possible. The Panel also received useful cooperation and assistance from several international organizations, such as INTERPOL, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and made proper use of their expertise. The Panel used high evidentiary standards throughout its investigation. Wherever possible, it also considered putting allegations to those concerned in order to allow them the right of reply.

During the investigation, where possible, the Panel shared the relevant information and cooperated with the States concerned for further thorough investigation at their level. Where appropriate, the Panel also brought the information collected during the course of investigation to the attention of authorities to allow them the right of reply, as requested in paragraph 20 of resolution 1343 (2001). A significant number of countries came forward with useful information on individuals behind certain shady companies and their financial transactions. To satisfy the oft-repeated rhetoric of "Where is the evidence?" "If you have evidence, show it", the Panel traced and reconstructed the entire sequence of events, starting from the origin of weapons to their end destination, using documentary evidence and the direct eyewitness accounts of the persons involved.

Concerning the planes involved in supplying illegal arms in Liberia, the Panel has in its possession copies of contracts signed by the contracting parties, requests and permission for overflight and landing, flight plans, cargo manifests, airway bills, documents showing the owners or operating agencies of the aircraft involved, pilots' logbooks, and insurance documents for the cargo and the planes concerned.

In collecting all this evidence, the Panel was able to identify the most important networks supplying Liberia and the RUF, and to give an analysis of the key players in those networks — suppliers, transport agents, brokers, suppliers of forged documents and organizers at the receiving end of the arms pipeline. The Panel was also able to document how, and through which bank accounts, those arms shipments were financed.

In mid-April, when the Panel embarked upon its mandate, there were active hostilities in the three Mano River Union countries: Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Six months on, there are significant signs of improvement in the situation. Welcome regional diplomatic efforts are under way to further advance bilateral relations between the three members of the Mano River Union, although there is still active conflict in Lofa County, Liberia, and the possibility of Sierra Leone gravitating back into conflict if the RUF does not want to release its hold on some of the best diamond areas. In order to curtail the support for RUF rebels who are still unwilling to give up their interests in diamonds for a lasting peace agreement in Sierra Leone, Liberia's total disengagement from the RUF must be ensured.

There has been a proliferation of the use of non-State actors in conflicts in the Mano River Union countries. These groups obtain weapons from State supporters; from their trade in diamonds, alluvial gold, cocoa and coffee; and from their military actions. Their actions have had destabilizing consequences, and can again destabilize the region. The junction of the borders of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone has been the fault zone where these groups have thrived.

The Panel remained cognizant of the humanitarian situation before and after the imposition of the sanctions on Liberia, and was fully aware of the concerns of Member States in that respect. The Panel also kept in mind the overall intentions of the Security Council to further the peace process in Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries.

This report covers in great detail the findings on the role of transportation in arms-trafficking, fraudulent aircraft registrations, the dynamics of the diamond trade, the misuse of end-user certificates, the misuse of Liberian Government revenue derived from maritime, logging and other forms of economic activity, violations of the travel ban and other violations of the resolution. Despite the Liberian Government's public statements of having complied with the arms embargo, a steady flow of new weapons continues to enter the country. In that respect, the Panel has documented five detailed case studies on such sanctions violations.

In addition to the findings indicated in the report, the Panel has collected evidence that was not included in the report because it did not meet the high evidentiary criteria set by the Panel. In such cases, further investigation will be required to collect incontrovertible evidence to support the case. This includes the case of the supply of ammunition to non-State actors in the subregion.

In its report, the Panel has delineated a series of specific recommendations for all the areas covered in the report. Timely implementation of those recommendations will go a long way in furthering the peace process in the subregion and in maintaining the momentum observed thus far.

As indicated earlier, the Panel travelled extensively and covered 36 countries. This has earned the Panel a reputation as the most travelled Panel of the United Nations, and probably the most expensive too. This travel was necessitated by Panel members' decision to verify every possible detail of the cases that were investigated. In many of the countries to which the Panel went, information-sharing and cooperation led to visible changes in the behaviour of the trafficking networks. Airline companies had to move their operations, some key individuals changed addresses or phone numbers, and some operations were stopped. This was a part of the search for peace in the region; what price tag can we place on peace and security?

During the Panel's presentation to the Committee on 19 and 25 October 2001, the Panel shared as much evidence as possible with the members of the Committee. However, should the need arise, and should time permit, the Panel members are available for any further questions and/or clarifications required.

Lastly, permit me to mention that this report would not have been possible without the dedication, courage, determination, tenacity, endurance, understanding, cooperation, sense of sacrifice and accommodation, friendliness and, above all, team spirit of the members of the Panel. May I further take this opportunity to extend appreciation for the support received from the United Nations Secretariat, the Security Council Committee on Liberia, the United Nations Resident Coordinators and United Nations Development Programme officials in almost every country the Panel visited and the Governments and individuals that provided substantial and helpful information to the Panel during the investigation.

The President: I thank Mr. Mahbubani for his introductory remarks, and Mr. Martin Chungong Ayafor, Chairman of the Panel of Experts on Liberia, for his presentation of the Panel's report.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ed Tsui, Director, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Mr. Tsui: In pursuance of Security Council resolution 1343 (2001), the Secretary-General, in his report contained in document S/2001/939, provides a preliminary assessment of the potential economic, humanitarian and social impact on the Liberian population of possible follow-up sanctions by the Council. The report focuses on three possible areas: the timber industry, rubber production and export, and the ship register. The methodology that we used in putting together the report first established a baseline of current economic, social and humanitarian situations and trends against which potential impacts of possible future sanctions are assessed.

Secondly, we gathered sector-specific information relating to these three areas. In addition to available reports, interviews were conducted with sector leaders, Government representatives and United Nations agencies working with those industries, and information was obtained from field observations. An analysis was then made of each of these sectors regarding direct and indirect employment generated by industry and Government revenues.

I wish to say a few words about the present situation in Liberia. The civil war between 1989 and 1996 took a heavy toll on the economy, with disastrous consequences for the social fabric of the country. The widespread destruction and looting of both the country's physical infrastructures and economic assets

have further worsened the economic situation of Liberia. Today Liberia is one of the least developed countries in the world, due to its low average per capita gross domestic product, which in 2000 was $177 — less than half its 1980 value. The country also suffers from a lack of economic diversification and poor prospects for sustained economic development.

As far as the humanitarian situation is concerned, most of the country's population is severely affected by high levels of unemployment and lack of access to basic services such as food, water, health care and education. What was once the country's breadbasket, the Lofa County, also suffers from occasional fighting. This has resulted in a large-scale humanitarian and human rights crisis, with acute implications for the subregion.

This rather fragile humanitarian situation could worsen if further sanctions are not accompanied by an increase in the response of donors. Donor support for the 2000 Consolidated Appeal has been quite disappointing so far. Only 5 per cent of the amount appealed for — $7.2 million — has been provided by donors. We take this opportunity to reiterate our request to Member States to take the necessary measures to encourage and sustain financial support for the humanitarian agencies operating in Liberia.

I would like to say a few words about the potential impact of possible future sanctions on Liberia, starting with the timber industry. A ban on Liberian timber exports would probably cause the loss of up to 10,000 relatively well-paid jobs. With an average of 9 dependants for each employed person, it is estimated that 90,000 to 95,000 people may lose their primary means of support. The shortfall of an estimated $10 million annually in salaries to timber workers would also have carry-over effects in other sectors, including supplies for the community of timber workers and shipping-related and plywood factories. Moreover, the Liberian timber industry provides $7.7 million in fees, taxes and royalties to the Government, representing about 9 per cent of the Liberian national budget.

The rubber industry employs 20,000 people, who would lose their jobs, as well as the 5,000 to 10,000 independent owners of small-scale rubber holdings. Including their dependants, a total of 225,000 persons would be directly affected by restrictions on Liberian rubber.

As for the Liberian ship registry, the Liberian Bureau of Maritime Affairs is a register for 1,600 commercial ships, generating $18 million in 2000 for the Government of Liberia, which is 20 per cent of the Liberian national budget. The Bureau employs less than a hundred Liberians, and most of the registry's work is carried out in offices abroad. Therefore, little direct impact on the Liberian population is anticipated from possible restrictions on the ship register. The revenues from it, however, would be seriously affected, and they represent the Government's largest and most stable financial source.

In conclusion, the Liberian economy is highly dependent on the export of primary products and is highly vulnerable to ongoing political and economic instability. Any additional burden imposed on this already weakened economy would have a negative impact on employment, social services and Government revenues, as well as further negative effects on the financial environment. These additional aggravating factors and their implications would particularly affect the most vulnerable in the Liberian population, given that their resilience and coping capacities are next to exhausted.

Should the Council consider additional sanctions, it may also wish to consider establishing mechanisms to regularly monitor their impact on the humanitarian and economic situation of Liberia and the unintended negative effects on its population.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): First of all, let me warmly congratulate you, Madam President, on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of November. I also take this opportunity to convey our highest appreciation to Ambassador Ryan of Ireland and his team for the excellent job done during Ireland's presidency in October.

We welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia, Mr. Captan, to the Council to take part in our discussion.

We are pleased to express appreciation to the Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Liberia, Ambassador Mahbubani, for his most comprehensive, analytical and forward-looking introduction of the report of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia. We also thank the Chairman of the Panel, Ambassador Ayafor, for presenting the report to the Council. Our thanks also go to the Director, Office for the Coordination of

Humanitarian Affairs, for presenting the Secretary-General's report (S/2001/939).

We are pleased to see the members of the Panel participating in today's debate. We commend the Panel for producing a detailed, documented and thorough analysis, which provides us with further understanding of the complex illegal networks and operations in arms and other economic activities that affect peace and stability in West Africa. It also addresses important aspects of the strengthening of the effectiveness of the implementation of Security Council sanctions.

With regard to the activities of the Panel, my delegation takes note with satisfaction of its attachment to the provisions of paragraph 20 of resolution 1343 (2001), which provided for the submission of the relevant information collected in the course of the investigation to the attention of the Governments concerned for their subsequent action. We consider that principle to constitute the most productive method of work for such monitoring bodies.

The report offers a number of worthy recommendations aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the measures taken by the Council to bring peace and stability to the countries of the region. We believe that the recommendations contained in the report constitute useful terms of reference for further discussions in the Security Council and the sanctions Committee.

I would also like to make brief comments on some of those recommendations which, in our view, may provide a good basis for ensuring effective implementation of the sanctions imposed by the Security Council.

My delegation supports in principle the recommendations on the measures aimed at preventing forged aircraft registrations, especially with respect to the increased role of the International Civil Aviation Organization and other civil aviation authorities. We also support a number of the Panel's recommendations on weapons, in particular those measures aimed at curbing activities of the armed non-State actors in the Mano River Union, which continue to be a destabilizing factor in the subregion. We also think it might be useful to discuss some specific recommendations on the information exchange mechanism on weapons procurement with the Economic Community of West African States, which has an established role to play in the area. The recommendations on end-user certificates, in our view, also merit close consideration, including within the competence of other relevant forums.

We take note of the Panel's observation that the travel ban has been the most effective sanction and at the same time the source of the greatest number of complaints from individuals affected by the sanctions regime. We agree with the Panel's recommendation that the travel-ban list should not be set in stone and, for humanitarian reasons, should be appropriately adjusted. My delegation looks forward to the Panel's useful input in this regard to the work of the sanctions Committee.

We read with great interest the Panel's recommendation on the strengthening of the United Nations internal capacity to monitor compliance with resolution 1343 (2001), drawing on the experience of the Angolan Monitoring Mechanism. However, we believe that this recommendation might be further extended to provide for the setting up within the United Nations of a permanent body, an office or unit within the Secretariat, which would conduct comprehensive monitoring of the sanctions regime. We believe that the establishment of such a mechanism could be an important part of the general sanctions policy and conflict prevention strategy of the Security Council.

In accordance with the mandate, the Panel investigated specific areas of Liberian economic activities and their roles in generating revenue for illegal activities, in violation of Security Council sanctions, and produced a number of recommendations which require further close consideration by the Council.

We have studied the Secretary-General's report on the humanitarian consequences of the possible future measures of the Council with regard to Liberia, and take serious note of the conclusions contained in paragraph 47 of the report. We believe that when this issue is taken up more closely by the Council, the analysis and conclusions of the Secretary-General should be given priority consideration.

In a few days, the Council will embark on the second review of the effectiveness of the existing sanctions regime with regard to Liberia, in accordance with paragraph 12 of resolution 1343 (2001). In this connection, I wish to express my delegation's readiness to engage in scrupulous work and careful analysis of all the sources and factors involved to follow up the

recommendations of this report and other reports presented to the Council, with a view to ensuring that the course of action that the Council takes will be fully justified and aimed at contributing in the most effective manner to the restoration of peace and security in West Africa.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): I, too, would like to thank Ambassador Ryan and his team for their excellent performance during the month of their presidency. I would also like to welcome the Foreign Minister of Liberia to this important meeting.

I congratulate the Panel on the detailed and well-documented report that has been put together on Liberia's implementation of the sanctions regime imposed six months ago. The report is a very good example of how we all want an expert panel to function: to compile facts independently, assess the activities on the ground and make concrete recommendations as to how a sanctions regime can be made more efficient, or possibly strengthened.

The positive aspect of the report before us is obvious. The sanctions have indeed had an impact. Six months ago there were active hostilities in all three Mano River countries. Today there are what the Panel terms significant signs of improvement in the region. There have been conciliatory meetings between officials of the three countries and preparations are under way for a top-level meeting between the Presidents of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) is in dialogue with the Government; there are plans for elections next year; and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) force is in the process of extending its control over the whole country. These are indeed welcome developments which should be taken into account when we consider the follow-up of the report of the Panel.

However, I think everyone is aware that the situation in Sierra Leone is still volatile. The country might again be drawn into conflict. The many armed non-State groups in the area, particularly at the junction of the borders of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, still obtain weapons from various sources. Among them, the RUF still has access to rich diamond fields. The actions of both the RUF and the other groups operating in these border areas could easily destabilize the region again.

For this reason, it seems right that the Panel report recommends that the sanctions on arms and diamonds be continued. The Council must be satisfied that Liberia has complied with the key demands of resolution 1343 (2001) before the sanctions regime is lifted. Unfortunately, this is not yet the case. Although the diamond embargo seems to be working, Liberia maintains its relationship with the RUF. RUF fighters are still active in Liberia, and a steady flow of new weapons continues to enter into the country. In this flouting of the sanctions lies the possibility of renewed destabilization of the Mano River countries.

In this context, Norway finds the Panel's recommendations on extending the sanctions regime to include other revenue generating areas worth a closer study by the Council. This goes, for instance, for the timber industry, which is a source of revenue for the Government and, unfortunately, a source of revenue for sanctions-busting. Extending the sanctions now or at a later stage to such sources of income for the Liberian regime might close the loopholes that still obviously exist.

However, we must make every effort to ensure that existing and possible extended sanctions do not inflict further hardship and suffering on the Liberian civilian population. It is a prime concern for the Norwegian Government that negative humanitarian consequences of sanctions be minimized as much as possible. As we understand the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, existing sanctions have not yet had a direct negative humanitarian impact on the Liberian population, beyond the already difficult circumstances in the country. We must do everything possible to avoid new burdens for the population. The sanctions have so far been targeted at the Liberian regime's ability to aid and sustain the civil war in Sierra Leone through its support for the RUF. That should also be our focus in further deliberations on this issue, while we pay attention to the possible humanitarian consequences of sanctions.

Let me also add that Norway fully supports a renewal of the mandate of the Panel of Experts for two more periods in 2002. As I mentioned at the outset, the Panel has been functioning in the way we want an expert panel to function. Its assessment missions to the area should therefore continue next year in order to pursue our monitoring of compliance with the sanctions.

I have a question that I would like to ask the Panel. There has been mention in the press lately of possible links between rough diamonds and Bin Laden and his network. Would it be possible for the Panel to comment on this information? Has the Panel come across information which points in that direction?

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I welcome your presidency, Madam. We are convinced that your guidance, like that of previous Presidents, will be highly successful. I also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia.

We thank Ambassador Mahbubani for his introduction of the report and for the detailed information provided to us at the meeting on Friday. We also express our appreciation to the members of the Panel of Experts, chaired by Mr. Martin Chungong Ayafor, for their broad and detailed report on the implementation of sanctions provided for in resolution 1343 (2001).

I also thank Mr. Tsui of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for his briefing.

The high quality of the information provided and of the additional reports prepared by the Secretary-General has allowed Council members, with the cooperation of the other delegations speaking today, to make a balanced assessment of those measures. We must always bear in mind the fact that sanctions imposed against the Government of Liberia because of its relationship with the rebels of the Revolutionary United Front are designed to promote peace in Sierra Leone and in the West African subregion.

In assessing the effectiveness of the measures imposed on the Government of Liberia, Colombia believes that attention must be focused essentially on the four following aspects.

First, the measures must be accurately targeted and calibrated. It is clear that we do not intend to direct them against the people of Liberia, which is already suffering from the debilitating effects of poverty.

Secondly, with respect to the attitude of the Government of Liberia, the report of the Panel notes that that Government has responded with some positive and some discouraging actions. The measures have thus proven only partially effective and we must adjust them accordingly.

Thirdly, we need the cooperation of the States Members of the United Nations, which the experts consider to be inadequate with respect to compliance with the sanctions. Members must therefore conduct themselves in the manner required by the United Nations.

Fourthly, the sanctions regime must be effectively monitored. This can be undertaken by the sanctions Committee, by the extension of the Panel of Experts' mandate or by other joint mechanisms to be considered.

In the light of the comments made by the Panel of Experts, we feel that the measures have been partially successful, since the prevalent environment in Sierra Leone is conducive to political reconciliation under the auspices of the United Nations Mission, while the incursions of rebel groups along the Guinean border early in the year have been neutralized.

We take note, however, that violations of the arms embargo continue. In this respect, before we consider additional sanctions against Liberia, we feel it would be advisable to call for compliance with the recommendations made in the Council's presidential statement of 31 August on small arms, in which arms exporting countries were called on to exercise the highest degree of responsibility in their international transactions so as to avoid practices that violate embargoes and facilitate the deviation of weapons to areas of conflict.

Greater vigilance is therefore necessary over intermediaries in arms sales and contracts for aircraft that facilitate the illicit trade. The passivity and lack of cooperation of some exporting countries only benefit the arms traffickers and make it impossible for the Council to obtain satisfactory results.

Moreover, we support the recommendation of the Panel of Experts that greater cooperation must be promoted between the States members of the Economic Community of West African States in order to expand and strengthen the regional moratorium on arms imports to the region, including enhanced exchange of information among members. We are facing a situation of conflict and political instability in which a regional approach to supporting Council action is necessary with regard not only to the arms embargo, but also to airport operations, the import and export of diamonds and travel restrictions on high-ranking officials of the Government of Liberia. We congratulate the three

countries of the Mano River Union for their steps to restore confidence and political cooperation among themselves.

It is thus necessary to prevent the weapons that circulate freely in the world's illicit markets from claiming more victims in Sierra Leone, Liberia and throughout West Africa. The Council will have to encourage improved dialogue with the United Nations funds and programmes in order to ensure that the humanitarian needs of the population continue to be met when private organizations find their contributions reduced. We are concerned that the official Liberian propaganda will succeed in convincing the people that the social and economic misery that has resulted from their country's poor administration and institutional management has been brought about by the United Nations. In this regard, we support strengthening the United Nations Office for Liberia in Monrovia.

Finally, we must ensure that the measures that have already been adopted by the Council continue to be respected by Members of the United Nations, companies and individuals. As long as we have no other monitoring mechanism, my delegation supports extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts, as put forward in the final section of the report. We have a commitment to ensuring that there will be peace for the people of West Africa, and we must not fail to see that commitment through.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Mali is grateful to you, Madam President, for having convened this public debate on the report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia. We welcome the fact that Mr. Captan, Liberia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, is participating in the debate.

We would like also to thank Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani, Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia, for introducing the report. Through him, we would like also to thank the members of the Panel of Experts for the important work they have done. We would also like to thank Mr. Edward Tsui of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for introducing the Secretary-General's report of 5 October 2001.

We have studied carefully the report of the Panel of Experts, and I should like to offer three series of observations.

First of all, I should like to emphasize that Mali, like other members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), attaches special importance to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1343 (2001).

Our position — which is based, inter alia, on the clear commitment by the members of ECOWAS to promote peace and security in the subregion — has been translated into concrete action. In accordance with our undertaking to induce Liberia to change its conduct at the regional level, ECOWAS sent two missions from our Mediation and Security Council to Liberia — in addition to a visit by its Executive Secretary — in order to verify that measures had been taken by the Liberian authorities to meet the demands of the international community.

Those missions were followed up each time by recommendations, such as the one on the establishment of a mechanism to monitor the implementation of sanctions. In the view of my delegation, such a mechanism could have been very useful to the Panel of Experts in its investigations. In this connection, we would like to hear the views of the Panel on how useful such a mechanism could be.

Secondly, I should like to comment on the humanitarian situation in Liberia. The Secretary-General's report of 5 October 2001 discusses extensively the humanitarian situation, which is indeed disturbing, even shocking. Eight years of a horrifying civil war have bled the country dry, destroyed the economic infrastructure and had a devastating impact on the most vulnerable sectors of the Liberian population. Did the sanctions imposed under resolution 1343 (2001) contribute to exacerbating this situation, inter alia, through a decline in international assistance, an absence of growth and continued fighting in Lofa County?

In any case, the Secretary-General's report of 5 October 2001 draws attention to the impact that eventual additional sanctions could have on Liberia, and particularly on the most vulnerable sectors of the population. Indeed, strengthening the current sanctions regime through sanctions on the Liberian timber industry, rubber sector or maritime registry could, in the view of the Secretary-General, have a negative impact on employment, social services and State revenues.

Thus, to preserve the credibility of the sanctions regime and attain the objectives sought, it is essential that we do as the Secretary-General suggests and envisage the creation of a mechanism that would periodically evaluate their impact on the humanitarian and economic situation in Liberia.

It is also essential that, as ECOWAS has recommended, international assistance to Liberia should resume. We fully support the proposal to hold a constructive dialogue with the relevant funds and programmes, and we encourage the Security Council to maintain its engagement vis-à-vis Liberia and its people.

We also hope that the international community will offer its full support to strengthening the capacity of aid organizations, including non-governmental organizations.

Thirdly, I should like to stress the need to put in perspective the positive developments that have taken place in the Mano River Union area.

As the report of the Panel of Experts indicates, encouraging diplomatic efforts are under way at the regional level to improve bilateral relations among the three member States of the Mano River Union.

In this connection, my delegation welcomes the major efforts recently made by the Liberian Government to improve its relations with Guinea and Sierra Leone. We hope that the decisions and recommendations emanating from the subsequent ministerial meetings will be implemented, thereby helping to restore confidence and stability in the subregion.

Along those lines, it is also essential to continue to develop a true partnership between ECOWAS and the Security Council, thereby promoting a regional approach to conflict settlement, for we believe that sanctions alone cannot restore peace in West Africa, or, indeed, anywhere else. Moreover, sanctions are not the only means available, nor are they necessarily the best solution available to us.

Resolution 1343 (2001) has most definitely had a positive impact. The Security Council must now carefully consider the conclusions and recommendations of the Panel of Experts. In this connection, we note that the Panel studied the diamond industry in Liberia and called on Liberia to acquire a credible and transparent certification scheme. We support that recommendation, because it would facilitate the consideration by the Security Council of a temporary suspension of the diamond ban and also would ease the hardship that artisanal miners, brokers and dealers are experiencing. We encourage Liberia's bilateral and multilateral partners to provide the technical and financial assistance needed to set up such a programme.

Concerning the travel ban, my delegation has always advocated swift responses to requests made to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001).

With respect to the recommendation on the continued monitoring of compliance with resolution 1343 (2001), my delegation would appreciate it if the Panel of Experts could tell us more about how a mechanism such as the one proposed in paragraph 66 of the Panel's report would work with the Liberia sanctions Committee.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): Let me join my colleagues in congratulating you, Madam, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council, and in thanking your predecessor, the representative of Ireland, for the successful way in which he led the work of the Council last month. My delegation wishes also to acknowledge the presence of the Foreign Minister of Liberia, Mr. Monie R. Captan, to whom we extend a warm welcome.

I wish also to thank Ambassador Mahbubani, Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Liberia, for introducing the report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia (S/2001/1015, annex) and for his most pertinent remarks. Let me also welcome the members of the Panel of Experts and congratulate them on the elaborate, detailed and probing report they have submitted in accordance with the mandate given them under paragraph 19 of section B of Security Council resolution 1343 (2001). I further thank Mr. Ed Tsui of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for his report.

The report of the Panel of Experts brings to the attention of the Council a mixed bag of good news and bad news from Liberia. The good news is that the Government of Liberia has taken some positive measures to implement the demands of Security Council resolution 1343 (2001). It has grounded all Liberian-registered aircraft, and the civil aviation authorities in Liberia are pursuing their efforts to

identify and localize Liberian-registered aircraft. Investigations are under way to establish the full extent of the problem of fraudulent registrations before a new registration list is opened. We also note that since May this year, when an embargo was imposed on Liberian diamonds, there has been no official export of diamonds from Liberia; this has been confirmed by Central Bank statistics. The Government of Liberia has also expressed its readiness to establish an internationally acceptable and transparent certification regime for the export of diamonds, and we welcome that. As for the travel ban, which the Panel considers to be the most effective sanction, it appears that it is working quite well. We encourage the Government of Liberia to pursue these efforts and to comply strictly with the other measures imposed by Security Council resolution 1343 (2001).

Turning to the bad news, my delegation and, indeed, I am certain, the Security Council as a whole remain deeply concerned over the continued relationship between the Government of Liberia and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone. Despite the assurances of the Government of Liberia that it has curtailed all relations with the RUF, the Panel of Experts reports that this is not the case. RUF units are involved in the fighting which continues in Lofa County in Liberia, and Sam Bockarie, the prominent RUF leader, freely travels to Liberia.

The Government of Liberia can and should play a more determining role in ridding the entire region of West Africa of rebellious activities.

Liberia today stands among the world's poorest countries. Eighty per cent of the population lives in abject poverty on less than a dollar a day. Underdevelopment, war and the inability to re-establish political and economic stability in the post-war period have left Liberia at the bottom of the Human Development Index: in fact, it ranks 174th out of a total of 175 countries. Given that situation, we note with concern that the natural resources of Liberia continue to be plundered to provide for the comfort and luxury of the elite. Thirty-four per cent of the budgetary allocation under the 2000-2001 budget went towards Government of Liberia special commitments. Most of those funds were utilized for defence expenditure on account of the war in Lofa County. It is important for the Government of Liberia, along with steps it is taking to implement resolution 1343 (2001), also to uphold the principles of accountability and good governance. We believe that adherence to those principles would garner international support to assist Liberia in addressing its economic difficulties.

The report of the Panel of Experts has in a lucid and elaborate manner exposed how, despite a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Liberia, a steady flow of new weapons continues to enter Liberia. The situation is compounded by the linkage that has been established between irregularities with respect to Liberian-registered aircraft and violations of the arms embargo. In most of the arms trafficking cases, the Panel has demonstrated that air transport has been a crucial element, and in all the cases the planes that were used had, in one way or another, been subject to document fraud, forgery of flight plans or irregularities with respect to the registration of the aircraft.

Another serious aspect related to the violation of the arms embargo is the practice of using undercover agents to effect payments for the procurement of weapons. Timber companies as well as individuals have been identified by the report as being involved in arranging payments for arms shipments to Liberia. In several case studies, the Panel demonstrates in great detail how end-user certificates have been forged by a network of brokers to export weapons. These facts indeed cause some disquiet. This situation reminds us of the urgent need for all States to fully implement the Programme of Action adopted at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in July this year. We welcome the recommendation by the Panel of Experts that the moratorium on small arms declared by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) should be broadened to include an information exchange mechanism for all weapons types procured by ECOWAS member States.

It is most unfortunate that at a time when Liberia is showing poor prospects for sustained economic development, the leadership of the country is exploiting avenues for self-enrichment. Revenue derived from timber production has also been utilized for sanctions-busting; that has been well illustrated in the report. We welcome the recommendations of the Panel on the commissioning of a detailed independent report on revenue from the timber concessions for the period January 2001 to July 2002.

We are pleased to learn that the travel ban has generally worked successfully. We remain concerned, however, over several violations of the travel ban, and we urge countries of the region to fully implement the provisions of resolution 1343 (2001) in that regard. My delegation supports the Panel's recommendation that the travel ban list should not be set in stone and that constant updating is required.

The Panel of Experts has made a number of valuable and constructive recommendations. These recommendations are well intended and are meant to assist Liberia in recovering from the economic deprivation it finds itself in. It is crucial that all parties concerned undertake the necessary efforts to implement those recommendations so that peace can return to the region.

It has been eight months since we adopted resolution 1343 (2001), and six months have passed since the sanctions were put in place. It is important at this juncture for the Council to take stock of the success or otherwise of its actions with respect to Liberia and to peace and stability in the West African region. Although the sanctions have generally worked and are yielding the desired results, it would appear that collateral damage and harm have been caused to the Liberian population, which even prior to the imposition of the sanctions was living in dire conditions. It is therefore necessary for the Council to have a fresh look at the most effective and least damaging way of applying sanctions in the spirit of the Bonn-Berlin-Interlaken process. Any new measure taken by the Council should be so designed as to target exclusively the Liberian elite, should have a clearly defined time-frame and should spare the Liberian civilian population any further hardship. We also believe that it is important for the Council to give careful consideration to alternate tracks that could lead to a political solution to the problems in the region. We call on the international community to continue its support and assistance to the Liberian population.

Recent political developments in the Mano River Union augur well for the region. We welcome the efforts of ECOWAS aimed at improving relations between the Government of Liberia and its neighbours, as well as at restoring confidence and stability in the subregion. We look forward to the regional summit of the leaders of the Mano River countries in January 2002, and we hope that the outcome of the meeting will produce results that will impact positively on the region and its people.

Before I conclude, I wish to bring to the attention of the Council the fact that, under the subtitle "Diamonds" in Part III of the report, it is mentioned that one Leonid Minin, a businessman with close connections with President Charles Taylor, had in his possession, at the time of his arrest in Italy in August 2000, documents of a Mauritian diamond company called Black Stella Diamonds and letters showing Minin's attempts to set up a diamond- exporting chain from West Africa, through a polishing plant in Mauritius, to Russia and China. I wish to bring to the attention of Council members that the Chairman of the Panel of Experts had written to my Mission on 11 May seeking information on the import and export of diamonds from Mauritius and the Black Stella Diamonds company. I provided to the Chairman all the information he had requested and informed him that all diamond imports were carried out through legal channels and that, according to records available, Black Stella Diamonds Ltd. had not been involved in the import or export of any diamonds. I have offered to provide any additional information to the Panel.

Mr. Ahsan (Bangladesh): Madam President, I welcome you to the presidency this month. We wish to thank Ambassador Richard Ryan and his very able team for their excellent work in the presidency last month. We also wish to recognize the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia at this important meeting. The Bangladesh delegation commends Ambassador Mahbubani for his detailed briefing on Friday to the Security Council and also for today's introductory remarks. We thank the Panel of Experts for the very detailed and substantive report, and Ambassador Ayafor of the Panel for today's presentation. We appreciate their efforts to maintain such a high standard of work. Mr. Ed Tsui of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, has presented a very useful account of the humanitarian situation in Liberia, and we thank him for this.

Sanctions on Liberia are having the intended results in advancing the peace process in Sierra Leone. We believe that the Security Council's focus on Liberia is useful for sustaining the momentum towards peace in Sierra Leone and the region. We shall continue to support measures taken by the Council to attain that objective. Nothing short of full compliance with resolution 1343 (2001) is acceptable.

We agree that all the recommendations made in the report merit careful consideration by the Security Council. Therefore, it may be useful to have an in-depth consideration of these recommendations by the Liberia committee after today's open debate.

The work of the Panel of Experts proves the effectiveness of continuing the monitoring of the situation by independent and credible mechanisms. We support the recommendation concerning a short extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts by next April to May.

Regarding the specific recommendations on the various issues, let me briefly mention four points.

First, we are not very sure whether an extension of the arms embargo to the three Mano River Union countries will produce the result that the Council seeks. We value the recommendations concerning development of a standard, universal End User Certificate that addresses the demand side of the problem. However, we noted the lack of attention in the report of the need to have regulatory frameworks addressing the arms producing and exporting countries, which would look into the supply side of the problem as well.

Secondly, on civil aviation, there are useful recommendations in the report. However, in the absence of an effective air traffic control system in the region and of primary, or even secondary, radar, much of the airspace of West Africa remains unmonitored. Planes can easily fly in and out without being detected. We can shut down the companies that are involved in arms trafficking at a given time; recommendations have been made in this regard. However, the traffickers will only have to open new front companies to be back in business. We have to find ways to help the countries of the region develop an effective air traffic control system to monitor their airspace so that the sanctions are not undermined.

Thirdly, we are looking carefully at the recommendations concerning timber and the maritime registry. We have noted that the Panel gave a lot of consideration to coming up with recommendations that avoid hurting the Liberian economy in the long run, which we believe is not the objective of the Council. This matter has to be given further careful consideration by the Council and the Liberia committee.

Finally, I wish to mention a more general point on the impact of sanctions on the Liberian population. We have been confronted with various statistics regarding the gravity of the impact. Putting aside the issue of their authenticity, it is clear that there will be a humanitarian impact. The Security Council should not only continue to monitor the impact of sanctions on Liberia; it must also come up with ways to mitigate the suffering of the Liberian population. Otherwise, the Council will not only lose the propaganda battle on the ground, but it will very soon also be seen to be hurting the innocent rather than those at whom sanctions are targeted. If the humanitarian situation is aggravated, it can definitely undermine international support for sanctions. We have already seen that humanitarian assistance to Liberia has dropped in recent months. It is important that humanitarian assistance be de-linked from the sanctions, and we call upon all donors to come forward in assisting the Liberian population in mitigating their suffering.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to pay a tribute to the very professional and excellent work accomplished by the Panel of Experts chaired by Mr. Martin Ayafor. The other day Ambassador Mahbubani mentioned the cost of the Panel's operation, which, we believe, appears to be entirely justified in view of the very substantive report submitted to the Security Council. Certainly in the future we might think about recalling the French proposal that a light standing mechanism be established to monitor all sanctions regimes decided upon by the Security Council, with a view to ensuring proper coordination among them.

I would also like to thank Mr. Tsui for his excellent report on the humanitarian impact that any additional sanctions would have on Liberia, and I welcome the Liberian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Captan.

With the two reports before us today the Security Council for the first time has all of the elements necessary to make a precise assessment of the effectiveness of existing sanctions and the advisability of imposing new ones. As most of the previous speakers have indicated, three conditions must be met. The first is a direct, established connection between the sector contemplated for new sanctions and the financing and arming of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The second is humanitarian consequences, which ought not be prohibitive for the

Liberian people. And third is a political interest affecting stability in the subregion.

The Ambassador of Belgium will be making a statement on behalf of the European Union, and France endorses it completely. I will therefore limit my intervention to six points.

First, France supports the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for greater effectiveness of embargoes on weapons which continue to be exported to the Mano River region, particularly those that are being sent to the various armed rebellions.

Secondly, France supports the recommendation made by the Panel of Experts aimed at lifting the prohibition on aircraft licensed in Liberia. The Monrovian authorities and people must be able to see that the encouraging measures of Security Council sanctions are sincere.

Thirdly, France would like to see resumed exports of raw diamonds from Liberia within the context of a certification system comparable to the one established in resolution 1306 (2000) on Sierra Leone's diamonds — as recommended by the Panel of Experts — and placed under the control of the sanctions Committee of the Security Council.

Fourthly, in view of the fact that measures to restrict exports of tropical wood from Liberia may risk the loss of the main means of sustenance for more than 100,000 persons in the country — as detailed in the OCHA report — France would like there to be an investigation into whether a direct relationship exists between the yield of such exports and the arming of Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone. An audit, as recommended by the Panel of Experts, might be performed with a view to enabling the Security Council to get exact information on this issue when it reaches a decision next May on a possible extension of the sanctions set forth in resolution 1343 (2001).

Fifthly, France approves the recommendation to place in escrow any revenue from the maritime registry. Its allocation would be subject to the approval of the sanctions Committee to ensure that its utilization is authorized for purposes in the State's budget, with humanitarian needs as a priority, particularly the restoration of public services.

Sixthly, France encourages a positive response to the request of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) — referred to by Ambassador Ouane — to create a small investigatory team in the field that would work with the Panel of Experts now working with the sanctions Committee and would help the Liberian authorities implement the measures set forth in resolution 1343 (2001). This team would be entrusted with monitoring arms trafficking, including arms being sent to the Liberian rebels; diamond smuggling; and the exploitation of tropical woods, rubber and the maritime registry. If the team, whose task would be to carry out spot checks and report to the sanctions Committee, were successful, the Security Council might decide to make it a standing body rather than renew the measures set forth in resolution 1343 (2001) when the resolution comes to term in May 2002.

I also have a question to address to the Chairman of the Panel. Last week, a United States newspaper reported that there might be a financial relationship between Mr. Bin Laden and the sanctioned diamonds in Liberia and Sierra Leone. I would be interested in hearing any comments from the Chairman of the Panel on this issue.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank the Chairman of the Liberian sanctions Committee, Ambassador Mahbubani, for his introduction of the two reports of the Committee as well as the discussion in the Committee. I would also like to thank Mr. Tsui, representative of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), for his briefing. In addition, I wish to extend a welcome to the Foreign Minister of Liberia for his presence at our meeting.

The importance of the Liberian question is self-evident. It is highly necessary for the Council to revisit this issue. China appreciates the Panel's efforts in preparing the report submitted to the Council. It is based on fairly detailed investigations on certain issues and contains valuable recommendations, in particular those concerning the improvement of existing sanctions measures — for example, to allow Liberia to reopen an aircraft registry and to design a standard end-user certificate regime for the import and export of arms — as well as the establishment of a special Web site for the travel ban. Those recommendations warrant further serious study by the sanctions Committee.

At present, the Liberian question clearly has two sides. On the one hand, since the Council's imposition of sanctions against Liberia last March, the Sierra Leone peace process in general has made major progress. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone has basically adopted a cooperative attitude in the disarmament process. The relations among Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia have also improved somewhat. On the other hand, according to the Panel's report, there are still serious violations as far as the arms embargo, the export of diamonds and the travel ban are concerned. This shows that the existing Council sanctions measures still have loopholes, and this concerns us.

The report also shows that the economic and humanitarian situations in Liberia, in particular the humanitarian situation among the most vulnerable groups, present great danger. The Council's sanctions have, in fact, resulted in serious economic repercussions in the country. The international community, including the United Nations, should show its concern by offering more humanitarian assistance. Meanwhile, in making any further decisions, the Council should take full account of any possible negative effect on Liberia's economic and humanitarian conditions.

The peace process in Sierra Leone is of vital importance to peace and stability in West Africa. In considering the question of Liberia, the Council should continue to adopt a regional and integrated approach — namely, it should focus its deliberations on the overall objectives of the Sierra Leone peace process, while also taking account of reports from other sources. We should continue to give full play to the role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the countries concerned, and closely listen to the views of all sides.

In sum, China is ready to join the other parties in studying closely the recommendations of the reports with a fair, pragmatic attitude, to promote substantive progress in the Sierra Leone peace process so as to create the necessary conditions for the ultimate attainment of peace and stability in West Africa.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Madam President, I would like to congratulate you once again on assuming the presidency of the Council this month. I should also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, our Irish colleague.

Today I would like to welcome the Foreign Minister of Liberia. I should also like to join preceding speakers in thanking Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani, Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Liberia; the Panel of Experts; and the Representative of the Secretary-General, all for introducing their respective reports on the matter of sanctions against Liberia.

At our consultations on the same matter on 2 November, Ambassador Mahbubani asked us a few very pertinent questions, and my delegation would now like to offer our contribution to this very important debate.

First, have sanctions proved effective? There is no easy answer to this. The Panel of Experts and the Secretariat agree that the peace process in Sierra Leone has made significant progress — for example, in implementing the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme — and that this is thanks to a change in attitude by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which is attributed to pressure brought to bear by the Liberian Government through the sanctions. If sanctions are indeed responsible for this development, one can only answer Ambassador Mahbubani's question in the affirmative. However, the situation on the ground is not quite so simple. First, one has to remember that whatever support the RUF may have received from the Liberian Government, the rebel movement has always had its own agenda and would have pursued that agenda by whatever means possible, while also recognizing that external support to rebel groups prolongs conflict.

Secondly, the Panel of Experts reported a number of sanctions violations. This shows once again that there is a need to set up on the ground a mechanism for monitoring compliance with the sanctions regime.

Thirdly, the Secretary-General notes in his report that although sanctions have not had a direct impact on the Liberian population, they have led to a devaluation of the currency and domestic inflation. Even more serious, international assistance to Liberia has dropped significantly during 2001, since sanctions were imposed. Given all of those facts, one can only question the validity and viability of what are called targeted sanctions or smart sanctions, whose application in the case of Liberia has shown their flaws.

The second question is whether some of the sanctions in place should be changed or adjusted. Here again, the answer is not simple. First, one would have to determine how and why one would change or adjust the sanctions. In our view, there are two basic factors that must be taken into account here. On the one hand, it is necessary to maintain dialogue with Liberia, which has to be an active party in finding a solution to the crisis afflicting the Mano River Union countries. On the other hand, one must maintain and strengthen the momentum that has been achieved in the management of the conflict in Sierra Leone. In this spirit, my delegation endorses the recommendations of the Panel of Experts on the travel ban and on the ban on the travel of Liberian-registered aircraft. I agree with other delegations on this point.

As for the question of diamonds, we believe we should call on the bodies involved to provide urgent assistance to the Liberian Government so that a reliable regime for the certification of origin can be set up, following the example of the regime established in Sierra Leone. Steps must also be taken to put an end to the illegal trade in Liberian diamonds. As for the arms embargo, the appropriate response to the violations reported by the Panel of Experts is not, in our opinion, to broaden the arms embargo to all non-State actors in the Mano River countries. Rather, a monitoring mechanism must be established on the ground. This mechanism would investigate, inter alia, the provenance and origins of these weapons. Let us remember that arms-trafficking is always catastrophic in this type of conflict. Everything possible must be done to put an end to it.

The third question is whether new sanctions should be imposed. When considering this question and the recommendations of the Panel of Experts, the case of Iraq, along with all the ongoing debate on that issue, immediately comes to mind. The similarities between the sanctions regimes for the two countries — in the event that the Council starts expanding the regime under discussion — are quite striking in terms of their impact on the population, their complexity and comprehensiveness and the difficulty of monitoring them. When we read the Secretary-General's report on this subject and on the very disturbing situation of the Liberian people, we cannot simply ignore the possible devastating impact that any additional sanctions might have on the Liberian people. We believe the Security Council must preserve the credibility of the sanctions regime on Liberia by avoiding any steps that would go beyond the framework for action established in resolution 1343 (2001). I concur on this point with my colleague Ambassador Ouane of Mali.

I would like to emphasize again that the Security Council must avoid resorting to purely punitive measures or measures that are not directly related to the objectives established in resolution 1343 (2001). In any event, we believe that the Council should refrain from action on the Panel of Experts' various recommendations until it has proceeded, pursuant to paragraph 12 of resolution 1343 (2001), to an evaluation of the implementation of existing sanctions — that is, until the time frame established for the current sanctions regime has expired.

The fourth question is how we can ensure that new or existing sanctions are very carefully targeted. The answer seems obvious to us if it is explained as follows: first, we have to avoid imposing sanctions when we know in advance that they will have devastating consequences for the civilian population. I repeat: we have to establish a mechanism for the regular review of the sanctions' impact on the humanitarian and economic situation in the country.

This brings us back to the problem of smart sanctions. We can only say once again that in the case of Liberia smart sanctions are not quite as smart as one would like to believe.

In concluding, I would like to stress that in our opinion the following parameters should guide our future consideration of sanctions on Liberia.

First, consideration of the Panel's many different recommendations must be placed in the context of the multidimensional approach that has been followed by the Council and recommended by the United Nations inter-agency mission dispatched by the Secretary-General to West Africa in March 2001 — in particular, this approach's political component and regional scope.

Secondly, the views and proposals of the Economic Community of West African States must be fully taken into account during the Council's consideration of follow-up action to the proposals of the Panel of Experts and the observations and recommendations of the Secretary-General, which we consider extremely relevant.

Thirdly, whatever action the Council may take on Liberia, we must make absolutely sure that we do not jeopardize the significant progress made to date on Sierra Leone and thereby worsen the situation in Liberia. Let us remember that the Sierra Leonean conflict will certainly not be resolved through civil war in Liberia. Let us also remember that the Sierra Leonean conflict actually has its origins in the Liberian civil war and that history has shown us that the destiny and future of the countries of the region are necessarily shared ones.

Ms. Lee (Singapore): We would like to begin by welcoming the Foreign Minister of Liberia to today's debate, as well as the members of the Panel of Experts and representatives of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Madam President, we thank you for arranging this public debate on the Panel of Experts' report on Liberia. The importance of such public debates lies in the fact that they allow non-Security Council members to help the Council in its assessment of the value of such reports. Such panels have become a very important tool of the Security Council in relation to the follow-up to the sanctions imposed by the Council. We need name only two panels to show the impact which such panels have had on the work of the Council: the Mollander Panel, which issued the first of the name-and-shame panel reports and paved the way for the setting up of the Angola Monitoring Mechanism, and the Sierra Leone Panel report, which paved the way for Security Council resolution 1343 (2001), on Liberia. The report that we are discussing today also fits that category.

It has been almost exactly eight months since resolution 1343 (2001) was adopted. The resolution imposed targeted sanctions on Liberia, with the main objective of dissuading the Government of Liberia from supporting non-State actors, particularly the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), from activities which were destabilizing the situation in neighbouring Sierra Leone and the West African region as a whole. The evidence of the Government of Liberia's activities and the recommendations for the measures that were imposed on Liberia under resolution 1343 (2001) were mostly derived from the report (S/2000/1195) of the Panel of Experts on Sierra Leone, whose membership is very similar to that of the Panel before us today. We are highlighting this to show that, given the possible consequences of such reports, we have to take them very seriously.

Under its mandate, the key goals of the Panel were to collect information on illegal activities, investigate violations of the current sanctions imposed on Liberia, collect information on the compliance by the Government of Liberia with the demands of the resolution, and investigate possible links between the exploitation of natural resources and other forms of economic activity in Liberia and the fuelling of conflict in Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries.

Today's consideration of the Panel's report is therefore a timely juncture for all of us to reflect on and consider the full impact of the sanctions on Liberia, including the unintended effect of these sanctions on the ordinary people of Liberia. In this respect, we also have before us today the Secretary-General's report requested under paragraph 13 (a) of resolution 1343 (2001). This report was written pursuant to the Council's request for

> "a preliminary assessment of the potential economic, humanitarian and social impact on the Liberian population of possible follow-up action by the Security Council in the areas of investigation indicated in paragraph 19 (c) of the resolution." (*S/2001/939, para 1*)

Those areas are basically the other areas of economic activity that the Panel was investigating as possible links to the fuelling of conflict in Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries. We note that this is the first time that a pre-assessment report has been requested, and we hope that this practice will continue.

We would like to commend the Panel for its very comprehensive report and extensive use of case studies. Several speakers have already commented on the specific contents and recommendations of the report. Thus, in our statement today we will not go into these details, but we would like to raise the larger question of how we assess the work of such panels.

It is not so much a question of costs, although we note that this report cost the United Nations $890,900, which makes it the second most expensive report, after the Angola Monitoring Mechanism report, which cost the United Nations about $1.6 million. The third most expensive was the Sierra Leone Panel report, which cost about $717,300. Our assessment should involve a

greater dimension, relating to the usefulness of the information that is contained in the Panel's report.

For example, what happened to the information obtained in the Fowler report? We note that the Angola Monitoring Mechanism that has been set up has collected even more information on sanctions violations. But our question is, what next? What happens to the information and evidence obtained by such panels? Is there a database in the United Nations that stores this? And what is the point of having such a database if it is only stored and not acted on? We ask these questions because it seems to us that the same criminal networks are referred to time and again, beginning with the Fowler report and cited in both the Sierra Leone Panel report, as well as in the report of the Panel before us today. In fact, in the Sierra Leone Panel report it was noted that

> "Where diamonds are concerned, there have been three Expert Panels examining many of the same issues concurrently. There has been useful collaboration, but there has also been overlap and duplication." (*S/2000/1195, para. 17*)

That point was made in December 2000. Little has been done to address it.

Another negative consequence of this lack of follow-up on the information obtained is that it further damages the credibility of the United Nations sanctions themselves. Our perception is that there appears to be only a one-off impact to the work of such panels. The countries investigated need only show compliance for the duration of a panel's mandate because there is no one to monitor them after the panel leaves. Even when the panel documents evidence of sanctions-busting, the lack of follow-up means that any attempt to show respect for the sanctions disappears as soon as the spotlight is off these countries.

While the implementation of sanctions is the responsibility of each Member State, their effectiveness could be increased if there were some monitoring of the sanctions. A permanent monitoring mechanism in the Secretariat could also assist States in their implementation and ensure a more professional and thorough approach to the implementation of the sanctions, rather than ad hoc panels. It could also assist the Council's work by being the link with sanctions committees and other United Nations agencies. Clearly, there should be better coordination within the United Nations system, not only to avoid duplication and save on costs, but also to ensure that there is consistency and follow-up.

Here we would like to express our regret that the report of the Council's Working Group on sanctions — which, under the note by the President issued on 17 April 2000 in document S/2000/319, was due on 30 November 2000 — has yet to be issued. While we do not intend to compromise its eventual issuance, we would like to state that the report would be very relevant to the issues we have raised today, particularly on the issue of consistency in the implementation of United Nations sanctions, and for ensuring that we make full use of the work of such panels. The report would also be relevant for addressing the next issue that we will be raising: what we can and should do to limit the unintended effects of sanctions when they have a negative — whether direct or indirect — impact on the humanitarian situation of the targeted country.

Although the sanctions were designed to specifically target the illegal activities of Liberia's elite, and not intended to harm the lives of ordinary Liberians, the report of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has confirmed the bleak humanitarian situation of the population in Liberia. The OCHA report has also highlighted that international aid to Liberia has been drastically reduced, falling from $138 million in 1998 to less than $30 million this year. By December many aid agencies will be pulling out of Liberia due to lack of funds. At an Arria-formula meeting with some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on Liberia on 17 October 2001, one NGO highlighted that Liberia is "starved of aid".

Of course, strictly speaking, the humanitarian situation in Liberia and the United Nations sanctions that were imposed on Liberia are separate issues and should be treated as such. Furthermore, indications are that the Government of Liberia's own corrupt practices have strongly discouraged international aid donors. Many donors are also suffering from donor fatigue, and the situation in Liberia does not seem to have improved after close to a decade. Yet, clearly, the Council cannot ignore the growing humanitarian crisis in Liberia, not least because OCHA has also highlighted that the Government of Liberia has mounted a successful information campaign to blame the economic and social woes of the country on the United Nations sanctions.

Sanctions are one of the most important tools of the Council, and the Council needs to ensure that its objectives are achieved without disproportionate humanitarian effects. We should be careful not to allow the United Nations sanctions on Liberia to suffer the same fate as the Iraqi sanctions regime. Both from the humanitarian perspective and for the credibility of the United Nations and its sanctions, while the Security Council must maintain the rigour and aims of its sanctions regimes, it cannot ignore the news of the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Liberia, especially when the Government of Liberia has laid the blame for it at the Council's doorstep.

One possible follow-up to the Panel's findings and those of the OCHA report on the humanitarian situation in Liberia is for Members of the United Nations to send suggestions to the Chairman of the sanctions Committee for its consideration. This is because the sanctions Committee is mandated under paragraph 14 (g) of Security Council resolution 1343 (2001) to make recommendations to the Council to make recommendations to the Council on ways to limit unintended effects, if any, of the measures on the Liberian population. As such, any suggestions by the United Nations membership would be useful to the discussions of the sanctions Committee on the necessary follow-up to the reports.

We thank the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for giving us the figures on the 2000 Consolidated Appeal in relation to Liberia, which reveal that only 5 per cent of the required $7.2 million, or only about $360,000, was received. This highlights the point we made earlier on donor fatigue in respect of Liberia. We should therefore be honest in our assessment of whether the people of Liberia are suffering because of the unintended effects of the United Nations sanctions. We should also question why the humanitarian agencies are pulling out from Liberia and if there is something we can do to arrest this trend. We hope that either the Panel members or OCHA could provide some information on this.

In the meanwhile, my delegation will continue to study in greater detail the findings in the Panel's report and its key recommendations relating to transportation, weapons, timber, diamonds, the maritime registry and the travel ban. We will work with the other members of the Council to ensure their appropriate follow-up and to ensure due consideration of the OCHA report.

Finally, my delegation wishes to highlight that we have already followed up one of the case studies mentioned in the Panel's report on alleged sanctions violations. Although the case in question relates to a transaction in August 1999, we have written to the Chairman of the Panel to request the relevant documents necessary for our further investigations on the possible implication of a Singapore-based company, Borneo Jaya Pte Ltd., in sanctions-busting. This request is contained in document S/2001/1043, which was referred to at the opening of this debate.

As a responsible member of the United Nations, Singapore holds all Security Council resolutions in the highest regard and is committed to the full implementation of resolution 1343 (2001).

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We join others in addressing warm words to you, Madam President, to Ambassador Richard Ryan, Ambassador Mahbubani, Mr. Ayafor and Mr. Tsui. We also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia, Mr. Captan, who is participating in today's meeting.

We are grateful to the Panel of Experts for its work it has done. Its report will certainly be helpful to the members of the Security Council in assessing the effectiveness of the sanctions regime against Liberia and in deciding on further steps in this area.

We share the view of the experts that the political atmosphere in the region in the last six months has improved significantly. At the same time, we cannot fail to see, however, how the humanitarian situation in Liberia itself has deteriorated. It would seem to us that the Council can't simply disregard these two factors when it works on future decisions on the matter of Liberia.

We welcome the progress noted in the report on aspects of sanctions, such as the re-registration of Liberian aircraft, the travel ban on senior Liberian officials and the embargo on diamonds leaving the country. At the same time, we are disturbed about facts cited regarding illegal activities by individual persons and corporations that are circumventing Security Council resolution 1343 (2001). All the cases described in the report must be very carefully investigated by the national law enforcement authorities of the relevant countries. We are convinced that invaluable assistance should be provided by the experts, making available to States all the materials they have collected.

The report contains a number of recommendations on many different aspects of the sanctions regime. We are prepared to consider the proposals very carefully, taking into account possible political and humanitarian consequences of applying them. We will very carefully take into account the position of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in these matters.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): First and foremost, may I warmly congratulate Jamaica and you personally, Madam President, on assuming the presidency of the Council in November. I would also like to thank you for convening this important meeting. I would also wish to thank very warmly Ambassador Mahbubani, Chairman of the Security Council Committee concerning Liberia, for his work and that of his delegation, and for the statement he made earlier.

I am very grateful also for the presence of Ambassador Ayafor and the members of the Panel of Experts and thank them for producing such an outstanding report. I would also like to indicate my delegation's welcome for the presence here today of Mr. Tsui, from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), who has briefed us on the Secretary-General's report of 5 October, a report which my delegation attaches considerable importance. Finally, I would also, of course, like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia to our meeting.

Belgium, as holding the Presidency of the European Union, will be making a statement later in this debate with which Ireland fully associates itself.

My delegation believes that the Panel of Experts has clearly done an excellent job. Its report is exceptionally well researched and impressively detailed. It is clear that the Panel has employed the highest evidentiary standards in its work. The case studies detailed in the report have been meticulously assembled.

The report is also crucially judiciously balanced. It makes recommendations that acknowledge areas where the Liberian authorities have made legitimate efforts to comply with the demands of resolution 1343 (2001), as well as recommendations that deal with clear breaches of the arms embargo by the same authorities.

We will need to be flexible to take account of convincing signs that may appear indicating that the Liberian authorities have demonstrated in good faith that they have renounced their connections to the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

We also need to be firm in the face of evidence that the Liberian Government is still violating the demands of the Council in respect of the arms embargo and the demand to expel members of the RUF from Liberia. In this respect, there are worrying indications in the report that the ties between the Liberian authorities and the RUF are far from broken.

Like other members of the Council here today, my delegation is encouraged at the recent progress in the peace process in Sierra Leone. We are heartened by the success achieved to date in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in that country, and we, like others, look forward to the planned summit meeting of the heads of State of the Mano River Union in January and to the successful holding of elections in Sierra Leone in May with the participation of the fully politicized RUF, which will have rejected decisively a military role.

But these objectives are planned, not yet realized. They are still some way from being achieved.

My delegation does not accept that because there has been progress that the Council should not necessarily consider additional sanctions measures. We believe that the progress achieved of late vindicates the robust and highly professional engagement of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the policy of sanctions. The Council demanded last March that the Government of Liberia, inter alia, cease its support for the RUF. We have not seen any indication of a demonstrable change in the attitude of the Monrovia authorities in this regard. If the January summit produces tangible results, we will warmly welcome this. We owe it to the people of the Mano River Union States to strive to preclude any relapse into open conflict.

Ireland attaches the highest importance to the aim of avoiding adverse humanitarian consequences when sanctions are imposed. On timber sanctions, there is such a broad and diverse range of views on the humanitarian consequences of timber-related measures, as to make it difficult to make a full and balanced judgement. This should not be seen as criticism of any one agency. It simply reflects the difficulty of obtaining reliable data in a country like Liberia where the level of financial transparency is low.

While we must require the Liberian authorities to meet their obligations, we have, at the same time, to avoid measures which would entail the further suffering of an already extremely vulnerable population. My delegation has studied carefully the report of the Secretary-General of 5 October on the humanitarian impact of further sanctions and listened carefully to the points made by the Director of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on the implications on employment, livelihoods and national budget. We fully note, therefore, the assessment of the humanitarian impact of sanctions on timber and give the points made by OCHA full weight. Accordingly, we believe that it is important that further investigation of the humanitarian consequences of timber-based measures be undertaken.

It is indeed clearly regrettable that some of the revenues from the legitimate and reputable Liberian International Ship and Corporate Registry have been siphoned to finance arms transactions in some instances rather than pay for desperately needed humanitarian relief and development projects. We note in regard, as I said earlier, what OCHA has said of the dire humanitarian state of the country.

The misuse of Liberia's economic resources — whether it is in the timber industry or the shipping and corporate register — to pay for the weapons of a rebel force which has visited such misery on the subregion is an affront to the people of the Mano River Union. It is also a clear violation of the demands of the international community expressed in resolution 1343 (2001).

Accordingly, my delegation believes that consideration should be given to the Panel's recommendation that the revenue from the Ship and Corporate Registry be paid into an escrow account that would channel the funds directly towards development needs.

The ongoing violation of the arms embargo continues to threaten the stability and security of the Mano River Union. Accordingly, we welcome the Panel's recommendation that the arms embargo should include non-State actors in the region — the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) factions, the RUF and the Guinean armed dissident groups. In terms of preventing illicit arms flows to the region, we commend the Panel's recommendation that United Nations establish a working group to develop the modalities for a standardized arms import End-User Certificate.

It is also important that we take note that the Panel has recommended areas where the Council might consider the easing or lifting of particular sanctions, such as the possible reopening of the Liberian aircraft registry in accordance with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). We are open to consider any such measures where there have been signs of genuine compliance.

It is clear that the travel ban has proved to be effective despite the violations that are meticulously documented in the report. We believe that this measure is a powerful instrument, but that it also needs to be deployed with care and flexibility. We fully endorse, therefore, the views of Panel that the travel ban list should not be set in stone. There is a need for the list to have a capacity to be amended, so that if it becomes clear that an individual should no longer be listed, then his of her name can be removed expeditiously. Conversely, it is equally important that there should be the capacity to add other names where this is deemed appropriate. We must also be vigilant to ensure that the loopholes and implementation gaps identified by the Panel are closed. The Panel has provided some interesting and balanced recommendations in respect of the management of the travel ban list. These seem sensible, and my delegation looks forward to discussing them in the Liberia sanctions Committee.

In summary, Ireland believes that the Panel has provided the Council with a commendable survey of the degree of implementation of resolution 1343 (2001), as well as a range of recommendations to help ensure more effective compliance in the future. We look forward to discussing these further.

We agree with the Panel that there should be an ongoing assessment of Liberian compliance, and therefore are supportive of the recommendation that the Panel should have their mandate renewed for a short assessment mission in April, as well as a later short mission if, and only if, the sanctions imposed on Liberia need to be renewed in May.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): Congratulations to you, Madame, for the assumption of the presidency in November and to Ambassador Ryan for a formidable handling of the chair in October. The United Kingdom fully supports the statement which

Belgium will later make on behalf of the European Union. We are honoured to have with us this morning the Foreign Minister of Liberia, and we welcome his presence here. We are very grateful for the presentations made this morning by Ambassador Mahbubani, by Panel Chairman Ayafor and by Mr. Tsui on behalf of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). We think that the Panel of Experts has done a superlative, professional job, and the whole team has clearly contributed to that. It is a very detailed report, based on sound methodology and on extremely thorough research.

The Council has to keep firmly in mind the purpose of the sanctions in resolution 1343 (2001), that is to press President Taylor for full compliance with the requirements of the resolution and to discourage him from fomenting instability in the region. The key question we have to keep in our minds is whether President Taylor is complying fully with the demands of the Council. The answer is, unfortunately, at this point, no. The bond between Monrovia and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) remains strong. President Taylor continues to buy arms in breach of the arms embargo. As Mr. Ayafor said this morning, there is a steady flow of new weapons which continues to enter the country. Thirdly, President Taylor continues to benefit from the sale of RUF diamonds, which may be going in directions that need further research in other contexts.

It is therefore crucial to increase the pressure on President Taylor, if we are to stop this continued destabilization of the region. Well, how? It is clear that timber and shipping are both increasingly important sources of funding for the Liberian Government and for President Taylor now that he can no longer profit as much as before from the diamond exports. We would like to see President Taylor stopped from using revenue from timber to buy arms. We believe that that a round log ban, as recommended by the Panel, would only temporarily disrupt President Taylor's finances, whereas a comprehensive ban on timber would better achieve the aim of sanctions, by depriving him of funds to buy arms. Secondly, we would wish to see revenues from the shipping registry going to legitimate Liberian Government purposes with independent monitoring, so that they cannot be diverted to buy arms. Thirdly, we want to see stricter enforcement of all the sanctions, including the travel ban. The Panel has revealed quite a number of breaches of sanctions across the board and the travel ban, in particular, I think, has been an effective instrument of the Council and needs to be maintained, although we are happy to ensure that the travel ban list is up-to-date and relevant.

For all these reasons and wider ones, we would welcome a follow-up report from the Panel of Experts, but we also agree that the Council should respond where Liberia has taken action to comply with Council demands. We support the recommendation to lift the grounding order on Liberian aircraft on a case-by-case basis and we agree that we should encourage the Liberian Government to establish a diamond certification scheme.

As for the important humanitarian considerations, the Council must restate clearly that sanctions are targeted at the Liberian Government and at President Taylor and that a travel ban and arms and diamond embargoes do not hurt ordinary Liberians. The report of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in that area is not the whole story. We need to encourage donors and non-governmental organizations to contribute to remedying the humanitarian situation in Liberia and to reverse the decline in humanitarian aid. The United Kingdom will play its part in doing that, having contributed £12 million since 1998 to the Liberian humanitarian situation, and we will contribute continually in that area.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I, too, would like to welcome you, Madam, to the presidency. I also welcome the Liberian Foreign Minister here today.

I also want to commend Ambassador Ayafor and his team for presenting us with one of the most comprehensive and useful reports we have seen in the Council. They deserve our respect not only for the thoroughness of their work, but also for their honesty and integrity, particularly in the face of several attempts by government officials in the region to influence the outcome of the report. The methodology of the report is highly professional and sound, with good analysis, and the five detailed case studies are especially informative.

In March of this year, the Security Council adopted resolution 1343 (2001) to impose an arms embargo, diamond ban and travel restrictions on senior Liberian government officials. We took these steps because we agreed that the policies and actions of Liberian President Taylor and his Government were

causing widespread instability and violence in the region. This continues to be the case, unfortunately, despite some progress in the Mano River Union and the welcome continuing efforts of the Economic Community of West African States.

The Secretary-General's report of 5 October, prepared by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, paints a bleak picture of the economic and humanitarian situation in Liberia. The fact that Liberia ranks 174th out of 175 countries on the human development index is very troubling, but equally troubling and saddening is the fact that Liberia's neighbour, Sierra Leone, ranks 175th on the same index.

The hardships now faced by the Liberian people did not commence with the imposition of United Nations sanctions this past March. They result from years of war and the policies of the Taylor Government. That, and not the imposition of sanctions, is the reason why international assistance and donor support for Liberia have declined.

We agree with calls for continued humanitarian efforts and my Government provided almost $10 million in humanitarian assistance to the Liberian people this year. But the situation in Liberia, as well as in Sierra Leone and neighbouring States, will really improve only when President Taylor stops all support for the Revolutionary United Front, ceases the exploitation of natural resources in Liberia and its neighbours and focuses on policies truly designed to help the Liberian people.

The Security Council has a responsibility to address and alleviate the suffering of the people in Liberia and Sierra Leone. My delegation believes that continued targeted sanctions against the Taylor Government promote progress in this regard by encouraging an end to destructive policies in the region, which are the real cause of the suffering there.

The report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia proposes a series of recommendations for our consideration. I hope that the sanctions Committee will convene as soon as possible to review in detail the many measures recommended. For now, let me say that the United States believes that existing restrictions on Liberian arms, diamonds and travel by senior Liberian government officials should remain in place pending further Council review when the mandate of resolution 1343 (2001) expires in May 2002. In addition, my authorities support the extension of the Liberia Panel's mandate for another six months so that Panel members can return to the region to continue their important work.

Before closing, I would like to ask Chairman Ayafor and the Panel members two questions. First, why are more non-governmental organizations not involved in attempting to alleviate the suffering of the Liberian people and why are United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, not doing more to help? Secondly, what was the humanitarian situation in Liberia before sanctions were imposed in March of this year?

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Jamaica.

Let me first of all thank Ambassador Mahbubani, Chairman of the sanctions Committee established under resolution 1343 (2001), and the Chairman of the Panel of Experts on Liberia for introducing the Panel's report. I also wish to thank the representative of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for the briefing we received.

As far as the humanitarian situation in Liberia is concerned, my delegation has noted the decreasing donor funding, which has exacerbated the already dire condition of the Liberian people, and that the presence of non-governmental organizations, as well as of humanitarian agencies, is on the decline in Liberia due to a lack of funding. My delegation urges international donors to increase funding to meet the humanitarian needs of the people of Liberia, particularly through the consolidated appeal, which is presently seriously underfunded.

The Panel of Experts has presented a report which is well researched and comprehensive and merits our careful consideration. As other delegations have already commented on several aspects of the report, I will confine myself to addressing a few of the issues raised.

First, the Panel reports that a steady flow of arms continues to enter Liberia and that access to small arms and light weapons has helped to perpetuate the cycle of violence in the region. The Panel report also cites the continued activities of armed non-state actors in the region and the fact that these groups obtain weapons from state supporters, trade in diamonds, alluvial gold

and other natural resources. It is indeed a tragedy that these groups continue to profiteer from war, continued violence and instability in the region. We therefore concur with the recommendation that the moratorium of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on small arms be broadened to an information exchange mechanism for all weapons types procured by ECOWAS member States for the purpose of transparency and confidence-building.

We also believe, as we have stated in the past, that the Security Council and the international community must assist the States members of ECOWAS to initiate a common system of controls that includes the recording, licensing, collection and destruction of small arms and light weapons. We support the Panel's recommendations on end-user certificates and the establishment of a United Nations working group to develop the modalities for a standardized end-user certificate.

We remain disappointed that the diamonds embargo continues to be violated and that the sale of Liberian diamonds, camouflaged as those from neighbouring countries, has become pervasive. My delegation would welcome the establishment of a diamond certification regime for Liberia and we note that the Government of Liberia has pledged to establish such a regime. This system must be credible and subject to international standards and scrutiny.

With regard to the monitoring of the implementation of sanctions, the recommendation of the Security Council Working Group on sanctions for improving the effectiveness of sanctions regimes requires the enhancement of internal institutional mechanisms within the United Nations system, including the development of a more effective monitoring capacity within the Secretariat, adequate staffing, streamlining of procedures and the harmonization of guidelines. The case of the Angola-UNITA monitoring mechanism serves as a good example, and we therefore support the proposal for an in-house capacity for monitoring the Liberian sanctions regime. As we continue to debate the effectiveness of targeted sanctions, critical examination must be made to ensure that sanctions imposed by the Security Council do not affect the Liberian population. Every effort must also be made to reverse the anti-United-Nations information campaign.

It is also critical that the measures taken are carefully balanced with an eye to the positive political developments that are occurring within the Mano River Union. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that the peace process in Sierra Leone remains on track and that normalcy can be restored to the region as soon as possible.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I call now on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia, His Excellency Mr. Monie R. Captan.

Mr. Captan (Liberia): I am grateful to you, Madam President, and to the Council for this opportunity to comment during these deliberations. Although my Government has not had sufficient time adequately to study the report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia (S/2001/1015, annex), submitted pursuant to paragraph 19 of resolution 1343 (2001), I am pleased none the less that the report is finally officially out so that the Liberian Government will not be repeatedly confronted with selective leaks and speculation via the Internet and in the print media.

The Liberian Government finds the report to be devoid of any substantive relevance, especially as it relates to the mandate of the Panel of Experts established under paragraph 19 of the resolution. The report of the Panel is, as members may have observed, absolutely consumed with activities antecedent to the adoption of resolution 1343 (2001) by the Council on 7 March 2001. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the Panel has merely sought to vindicate itself with respect to the inherent flaws of the original report (S/2000/1195), which contributed to the imposition of sanctions on Liberia.

My Government has arrived at that conclusion based on the fact that the report does not in any meaningful way address the question of compliance by the Government of Liberia with the critical provisions set forth in the paragraph 2 of resolution 1343 (2001). All of the actions and steps taken by the Government in compliance are unfortunately relegated to meaningless comments made in passing, while a disproportionate amount of time is spent on issues that should have been adequately addressed in the original report.

I should now like to draw the Council's attention to the core issue we face: the situation in Sierra Leone, for which resolution 1343 (2001) was adopted. The

Council wanted peace in that country, and it made stringent demands that Liberia expel all members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), cease all financial and military support to the RUF, prohibit the importation of uncertified Sierra Leonean diamonds, freeze all assets of the RUF in Liberia and ground all aircraft under Liberian registry.

The Council has had the time to come up with a realistic checklist on progress in peacemaking efforts in Sierra Leone, and on Liberia's compliance or lack of compliance vis-à-vis the conditions or demands in resolution 1343 (2001). Let me say unequivocally that the Government of Liberia is in compliance with resolution 1343 (2001), and that these issues should have been the primary focus of the Panel's report. The resolution clearly differentiated between its objectives and the means intended to achieve those objectives. The Panel's report did not concentrate on the concrete and measurable progress made to achieve the objectives of the resolution, but concentrated rather on the means, as though they were ends in themselves, thus losing its focus on the intentions and the purpose of the resolution.

The Council intimated to my Government that the sanctions were intended to bring pressure to bear on the Government of Liberia and were not intended to be punitive in nature. In essence, the adoption of resolution 1343 (2001) and the measures imposed were intended, according to paragraph 3 of that resolution, "to lead to further progress in the peace process in Sierra Leone".

My Government, as a Member of the United Nations, is fully committed to the principles of the United Nations and holds the Security Council in high esteem. It would not be in Liberia's national interest to ignore demands made upon it by this body. This body should not dismiss my words or consider them trite when I say that we are fully aware that instability or insecurity in Sierra Leone has a negative impact on the entire subregion.

Let me assure the Council that Liberia is aware of and pleased with the success of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in its mission of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the RUF and other militias while correspondingly deploying its own forces and extending the authority of the Government of Sierra Leone into areas which were under the control of the RUF. The President of Liberia has recently communicated to the Secretary-General his views on the issues underpinning the crisis in Sierra Leone, on the impact of sanctions on Liberia and on regional efforts at establishing peace and stability within the subregion.

The Mano River Union countries, namely Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, have held and continue high-level discussions generally aimed at enhancing peace, security and stability within their territories. Those discussions will also contribute to consolidating and sustaining the gains made in the Sierra Leonean peace process. The inter-governmental meetings that took place at Monrovia, Freetown and Conakry resulted in agreement on specific and concrete recommendations and a work plan and timetable for implementation. Crucial among the measures to be taken are: deployment of joint border security and confidence-building units; sharing of intelligence information; expulsion of all dissidents to their countries of origin; opening of common borders; establishment of a legal framework to deal with dissidents and those in violation of the Mano River Union Non-Aggression and Security Cooperation Treaty; and protection of refugees, among other measures. Mano River Union Ministers for Foreign Affairs will meet at Freetown on 11 December 2001 to assess the level of progress achieved in the implementation of the measures recommended by the Joint Security Committee. The heads of State of the three Mano River Union countries are scheduled to meet in January 2002, which will be the culmination of the ongoing efforts undertaken by the three Governments.

While attending the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Mano River Union countries will meet the Secretary-General to brief him on current developments within the subregion and to solicit his support for the implementation of the measures adopted by the Joint Security Committee of the Mano River Union.

There are, however, three issues of critical concern to the Government of Liberia which must be addressed by the Council, given its mandate. The first issue has to do with Liberia's security concerns. In the past, the international community and the Security Council have ignored this issue, even though it could have a long-term negative impact on the subregion. Liberia has been under sustained attack from dissidents in Lofa County, in the northern part of the country,

since April 1999. Many Liberians of all ages have been killed, thousands more have become internally displaced or have been turned into refugees, and most villages have been burnt and destroyed. Conditions in the camps for internally displaced persons are critical, with severe cases of malnutrition among children and the elderly, while hunger and diarrhoea continue to afflict members of displaced populations, who live in constant fear of renewed armed attacks.

It has been most difficult to put an end to this incursion and provide for the security of our people, because the Liberian Government has been unable to secure the means to adequately defend its territory and people. My Government would like this Council to remove those constraints, which are severely limiting, so that Liberia, in a transparent way, can defend its territory and sovereignty, as is the inherent right of every Member of this Organization under its constitution and Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Secondly, as a matter of moral responsibility, I must call this Council's attention to the suffering of the Liberian people. Liberia underwent a protracted seven-year civil crisis and has yet to receive meaningful assistance from the international community in the revitalization of its human and physical resources and infrastructure. What was bad has been made worse with the imposition of sanctions. Resolution 1343 (2001) is engendering punitive effects. Liberia has received no official development assistance, and donor assistance for United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations operating in Liberia has substantially declined over the past four years.

The current unemployment rate is 85 per cent, while 80 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, the illiteracy rate is estimated at 80 per cent. Half of all school-aged children do not attend school. Infant mortality stands at 133 out of 1,000 live births. Disability prevalence in the population is 16.4 per cent, of which 12.7 per cent is war-related. The World Health Organization rate for a post-war country is between 7 to 10 per cent. The prevailing causes of disabilities are alarming, with 91.5 per cent acquired through trauma and disease. About 21 per cent of urban dwellers and 80 per cent of rural dwellers have no access to safe drinking water. Adequate sanitation is unavailable to approximately 70 per cent of the population. An estimated 8 per cent of the population is reportedly HIV-infected.

This country, Liberia, a victim of war, poverty and disease, is today also the victim of a sanctions regime with which its people must learn to cope in their daily lives. Available statistics show a direct correlation between the imposition of sanctions and the decline in the living standards of the Liberian people. Today, I stand impatient as I await this Council's action to alleviate the human suffering in my country.

The third issue of concern to the Government of Liberia is the apparent inequity with which resolution 1343 (2001) is administered. The report of the Panel of Experts has finally admitted and drawn attention to the negative influence of non-State actors along the Mano River frontier and their sponsors. The Panel confirms their attacks on Liberia as commencing as early as April of 1999. There has been no condemnation of these attacks; nor has there been any reference to the violation of paragraph 4 of resolution 1343 (2001). These attacks into Liberia by dissidents are the major cause of all the human suffering in Lofa County.

The Security Council is obliged to respond to these acts of aggression against innocent Liberians, as it would respond to similar attacks of aggression elsewhere. When double standards are used in the disposition of international disputes, efforts to achieve genuine peace are undermined.

Madam Chairman, permit me to remind the Council that 10 months ago there was no dialogue between the Governments of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. There was no significant progress in the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) process in Sierra Leone. There was no significant deployment of forces of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in territory controlled by the RUF, and the prospect for elections in Sierra Leone was bleak.

Today, some 10 months after the adoption of resolution 1343 (2001), the three Governments of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone have engaged in extensive dialogue that will lead to a summit of heads of State of the Mano River Union. Significant progress has been reported in the DDR programmes in Sierra Leone. UNAMSIL forces have been deployed throughout Sierra Leone, including in former RUF-controlled territory. The authority of the Sierra Leonean Government has been extended throughout the

territory of Sierra Leone, and elections in Sierra Leone have been set for May 2002.

What will this Council do to help encourage, consolidate and sustain, in a positive way, the progress achieved within the Mano River Union, and Sierra Leone in particular?

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. De Loecker (Belgium) *(spoke in French)*: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries of Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this statement.

Madam President, first of all allow me to congratulate you as you take up the presidency of the Security Council and to congratulate Ambassador Ryan for his outstanding work during his presidency during the month of October.

First, I would like to thank Ambassador Mahbubani, Chairman of the sanctions committee, Ambassador Ayafor, Chairman of the Panel of Experts, and the members of the Panel themselves for the remarkable work they have accomplished. Indeed, the report on sanctions promulgated by the Security Council concerning Liberia is a detailed and revealing document. We welcome the Panel's methodical and painstaking approach and the precise information which they have provided, and which we have examined with the greatest attention.

Allow me to recall that these sanctions were imposed with a clear aim: that of creating a propitious environment for the peaceful resolution of the crisis in Sierra Leone. A peaceful resolution implies that the links between Liberia and the rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) should be broken, as the latter have profited far too long from this external support in conducting a merciless war against the Sierra Leonean people. The European Union reiterates that the Liberian Government has to respect the dispositions of resolution 1343 (2001) and that it is its responsibility to have the sanctions lifted.

Moreover, the imposition of sanctions is also part of a more comprehensive strategy aimed at re-establishing security in the subregion. The international community cannot allow its efforts and the considerable resources that it has invested in peace in Sierra Leone to continue to be sabotaged by manoeuvrings at the regional level.

Unfortunately, we are obliged to note that, six months after the establishment of the sanctions regime, the Panel of Experts reports serious violations of that regime. In practice, rough diamonds are leaving Liberian territory and weapons are entering it, and despite the general effectiveness of the travel ban, 27 violations have been noted by the Panel. Moreover, revenues from the timber industry and the shipping registry have been collected to be used for arms purchases, in violation of the United Nations arms embargo. It is obvious that these violations are possible only because of the complicity of unscrupulous individuals and of certain countries. The Union believes that it is indispensable that those involved should be made to face their responsibilities and to fulfil the obligations incumbent upon them by virtue of the United Nations Charter. There should be no exceptions to the implementation of the sanctions.

The Panel's report is an invaluable tool that we very much hope will enable us to increase the effectiveness of the monitoring of the sanctions regime. We are aware, however, that this is only one element in the equation. Nothing can be achieved without the cooperation of a multitude of players, both within the United Nations and elsewhere. In this respect, we think that to highlight sanctions violations is far from sufficient. The Security Council must send a firm an unambiguous message to all those involved, urging them to implement its decisions immediately and fully. Furthermore, some technical improvements could be made to the sanctions regime, particularly the examination by other bodies of some of its aspects, such as end-user certificates for arms. The European Union supports the recommendation to the Security Council to ask for a follow-up report by the Panel of Experts next year.

Another important initiative is currently under way: the Kimberley process, which is aimed at establishing an international certification system for diamonds. The European Union strongly supports this initiative and hopes that the process will yield fruitful results at this session of the General Assembly. The international certification system should make it possible to prevent any diversion in the context of

traffic in conflict diamonds. We also believe that more transparency in diamond-trading is required, particularly through the regular publication of detailed statistics on diamond imports and exports.

In parallel with the problem of resources, there is an urgent need to tackle the problem of arms from apparently never-ending sources. Once again, closer cooperation is needed between Member States, particularly in West Africa. The arms traffic must be curbed by more effective and systematic control mechanisms, backed by a real willingness to implement them scrupulously. In this context, the European Union supports the effective implementation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) moratorium on small arms.

The humanitarian impact of these measures cannot be minimized or ignored, as Mr. Tsui has reminded us. In considering how to follow up these sanctions, account must be taken of the Secretary-General's report, which contains a preliminary assessment of the economic, humanitarian and social effects that might arise from additional sanctions on the Liberian people. The European Union welcomes the fact that this aspect is being seriously taken into account. It supports the Secretary-General's proposal to envisage the creation of a mechanism responsible for regularly reviewing the humanitarian and economic impact of sanctions imposed on Liberia if the Security Council were to adopt additional sanctions. He quite rightly stresses that unintentional negative consequences for the civilian population should be avoided, and that certain erroneous views of the sanctions regime and its objectives should be refuted.

We are all aware of the importance of an effective dialogue at the regional level in the context of a peace process. The European Union, in particular through its Special Representative of the Presidency for the Mano River Region, Mr. Hans Dahlgren, supports a meeting between the heads of State of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in January 2002, as proposed by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs in September. It is clear that the results of the efforts that have been made will be reinforced by a wider approach at the regional level. The European Union will continue its dialogue with ECOWAS, and expresses its support for the ECOWAS efforts aimed at promoting peace in the subregion.

In conclusion, we would like to reaffirm the importance that we attach to increased respect for the sanctions regime. We would support any démarche or measure making it possible to curb the flow of resources and arms, which fuel the war and violence to the detriment of any peace initiative, and above all to the detriment of a people that invariable suffers the devastating effects.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Guinea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fall (Guinea) *(spoke in French)*: Madam President, I should like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. I know and admire your diplomatic abilities, and I am convinced that the Council will work effectively under your leadership. I should also like to congratulate Ambassador Ryan on the excellent work done under his presidency last month.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation for the excellent report of the Panel of Experts set up pursuant to paragraph 19 of Security Council resolution 1343 (2001), on Liberia. This report is in document S/2001/1015, dated 26 October 2001. Under its mandate, as set forth in page 20 of the report, the Panel considered the following matters: violations of the arms embargo; the Liberian Government's ending of all support for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), whose destabilizing role in the subregion has often been demonstrated; investigation of the exploitation of natural resources and other economic activities that feed the conflict in our subregion; the illegal activities of some individuals relating to the conflict; and all violations of the provisions of resolution 1343 (2001).

In the light of the content of the report of the Panel of Experts, my delegation would stress its concern over the many flagrant violations of resolution 1343 (2001). We endorse the following recommendations: first, that the arms embargo on Liberia be maintained until it is determined that the Liberian Government has complied with all the provisions of resolution 1343 (2001); secondly, that an arms embargo be imposed on the armed non-State actors in the three countries of the Mano River Union; thirdly, that investigations continue on the amount of funds allegedly diverted from logging to buy arms, in violation of the sanctions; fourthly, that a mandatory, credible and transparent certification regime for

diamonds be established for Liberia, as has already been done in the cases of Sierra Leone and Guinea; and lastly, that a reliable system be established or strengthened in the subregional airports to prevent the movement of all persons under a travel ban, pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001).

My delegation believes that the current calm along the Guinean borders and the significant progress made in Sierra Leone came about mainly because of the following two factors: first, sanctions were imposed under resolution 1343 (2001), which significantly constrained the activities of the Monrovia authorities; and secondly, the Guinean armed forces regained control of the situation on the ground and were able to contain and push back rebel troop attacks.

Finally, my delegation would like to report to the Council on recent events in our subregion.

These positive events supporting the international community's efforts to restore peace and security were possible due to the clear-sightedness of the Mano River Women Peace Network. Several ministerial-level meetings have been held recently in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, following its initiative. Important questions were discussed during the meetings, relating to the activities of armed bands in the subregion, the situation of refugees, measures to rebuild confidence and security in the region, and the need to reactivate the various organs of the Mano River Union.

My country believes that the objective conditions for making the Mano River basin an area of stability, security and socio-economic integration essentially depend on all its members respecting the conventions and treaties linking the three countries, including the Treaty on non-aggression and security signed at Monrovia in 1986 and the 15th Protocol of the Union Declaration, signed at Conakry on 8 May 2000.

In carrying out this undertaking, my country would like to be assured of the full support of the Security Council, whose fundamental role in the maintenance of international peace and security is clear.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, Mr. Sahr Matturi. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Matturi (Sierra Leone): My delegation congratulates you, Madam President, on assuming once again the presidency of the Security Council. We will no doubt have the opportunity at a later date to pay tribute to the Jamaican delegation under your leadership for its distinctive contribution to the work of the Security Council during the past 22 months. For now, we can only say that we did not expect less. We also thank Ambassador Ryan of Ireland for directing the Council's loaded agenda during October.

The report of the Panel of Experts established under resolution 1343 (2001) is not just another report or a document prepared for archival purposes. In our view, it is a silent but important contribution to the side of peace and stability in Sierra Leone and the entire West African subregion. We have arrived at this conclusion because we still believe that the measures imposed by the Council on Liberia last March — measures that the Panel has been monitoring — are preferable to launching a multinational military action against Liberia. Sanctions in our region are a peaceful means of resolving armed conflicts.

As we review the work of the Panel, we should remind ourselves of the reason behind Security Council sanctions against Liberia. We recall that the Council had determined that the active support provided by the Government of Liberia for armed rebel groups in neighbouring countries — in particular, its support for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone — constitutes a threat to international peace and security in the region. This is why the Council, among other things, demanded in resolution 1343 (2001) last March that the Government of Liberia immediately cease its support for the RUF in Sierra Leone and for other armed rebel groups in the region. This is why my delegation commends the Chairman and the other members of the Panel for their detailed account of its investigation, in particular, of the role of non-State actors in the subregion and the proliferation of arms, as well as the relationship between the RUF and the Government of Liberia. We also draw attention to the executive summary in its report concerning this relationship. These are the two core elements of the entire report, which in our view should be the basis on which the Council takes its next decision concerning sanctions against Liberia.

The Panel has already given an indication of the course of action that the Council should take. In this connection, we welcome the statement by the President

of the Council last Friday that after the briefing by the Chairman of the Liberia sanctions Committee, members of the Council expressed their commitment to the continued monitoring of the implementation of resolution 1343 (2001) and reaffirmed the need for early and full compliance with the measures imposed on Liberia under the resolution. We look forward to the proposed further discussion to be undertaken by the sanctions Committee on the Panel's recommendations. While studying other aspects of the Panel's report, the Sierra Leone delegation looks forward to appropriate action by the Council.

In closing, we thank Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani of Singapore, Chairman of the sanctions Committee, for his concise introduction of the Panel's report.

Finally, I express some concern over recent revelations — and if further investigations revealed this, it would be appreciated by my Government — of Al Qaeda's connection with the RUF in Sierra Leone.

The President: I now give the floor to the Chair of the Panel of Experts on Liberia, Mr. Martin Chungong Ayafor, to respond to questions posed.

Mr. Ayafor: Before we address the issues that have been raised by some members of the Council, I would like, on behalf of the Panel, to thank the members of the Council for their appreciation directed to us, the members of the Panel, for the report.

If I correctly recorded the questions raised, there was a question from Norway concerning information on alleged Bin Laden network activities in Sierra Leone. The same question was raised by the representative of France. The representative of Mali indicated that he wanted further clarification on the usefulness of the monitoring mechanism proposed by the Panel in its recommendation. Finally, three questions were raised by the representative of the United States. If there are any other questions that I did not take note of, I request that they be indicated so that we can give responses as we proceed.

On the issue raised by the representatives of Norway and France, may I indicate that the focus of attention on international terrorism, and, more specifically, on the activities of bin Laden and his Al Qaeda network, only surfaced at the United Nations after the 11 September events. In this respect, while the Panel did not particularly investigate anything concerning the presence or activities of Al Qaeda in Sierra Leone or Liberia, we did note in our report the activities of the individual mentioned — Ibrahim Bah. His name came up in the Sierra Leone report, as well as the present report. Should it be the intention of the Council to have this situation investigated further, certainly the Panel would have no objections.

With respect to the issue raised by Mali concerning our proposal in paragraph 66, we felt that within the period between now and when we proposed that the Panel could go back to the field there would be a vacuum. To fill that vacuum, we thought that the Secretariat could have an in-house officer for Liberia, who could continue to monitor compliance with resolution 1343 (2001). In the process, he could develop a database of whatever violations are registered from the field. He could also, in letters or telephone calls, request clarification and/or details, so that the Security Council Committee on Liberia, and eventually the Council itself, could be informed.

I now turn to the question raised by the United States as to why the activities of non-governmental organizations in the region are limited. We, as the Panel, cannot provide adequate answers as to why non-governmental organizations are not operating in Liberia or why humanitarian agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, are not doing enough in Liberia. The representative of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, who is present, could probably provide answers to those questions.

With regard to the humanitarian situation in Liberia before the imposition of sanctions, the Secretary-General's report (S/2001/939) contains on page 6 a graph showing that humanitarian assistance to Liberia started to decline some four years back. That was not as a result of the imposition of sanctions, because the sanctions came into force in May this year. Besides, that is confirmed in the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia, who indicated that humanitarian assistance to Liberia started declining four years ago.

If there are other requests for clarification, I would, with your permission, Madam President, invite Mr. Harjit Sandhu, who served as the focal point and Coordinator of the Panel, to add some details.

The President: I thank Mr. Ayafor for answering the questions raised. I now give the floor to the representative of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Mr. Kennedy: I thank the members of the Council for their keen interest in the humanitarian situation in Liberia. This goes directly to the question raised by the representative of Singapore: what can be done to highlight the humanitarian concerns in Liberia and what can be done to keep and expand the humanitarian presence there? I would offer three thoughts.

The first concerns resources. The money sought by non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies for Liberia is relatively modest. But, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report, the response has been even more modest. We need the support of donor Governments. Later this month in Geneva, on 27 November, we will launch the consolidated appeal for Liberia. We would encourage the Council's support and generosity.

The second item, which I think is a good example, is last week's Arria Formula meeting on Liberia. We need increased visibility and advocacy for the people of Liberia. I think that, because of its long-standing nature and the fact that other new crises are crowding the agenda, the humanitarian situation there tends to be forgotten and overlooked. We cannot forget the tens of thousands of people there who are in dire shape and need continued assistance.

Lastly, I think we need, as indicated in the report, the right kind of environment in Liberia to deliver assistance. The anti-sanctions campaign, with its knock-on effects on the environment for agencies and non-governmental organizations, is not helpful and needs to be changed so that there is an enabling environment for non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies to operate and keep a presence there.

In response to the question by the representative of the United States, on the difference between the humanitarian situation before the imposition of sanctions, in March this year, and since, I think that, simply put, the humanitarian situation was abysmal prior to March 2001, and it remains abysmal today.

The President: I thank Mr. Kennedy of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for responding to the questions raised.

There are no other speakers inscribed on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.